United Nations ST/IC/2014/14

Secretariat

8 May 2014

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Review of staff claims for dependency benefits for 2013**

1. The purpose of this circular is to inform staff members of the manner in which the review of their entitlements to dependency benefits for 2013 will be conducted starting from 1 June 2014. See annex I for details on the types of dependency benefits, annex II for contact locations and annex III for information on the documentation required for the continuation of benefits. The entitlement to dependency allowance is established in staff rule 3.6 and implemented under administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, entitled "Dependency status and dependency benefits".

2. All staff at Headquarters and the staff of United Nations information centres, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and field missions and personnel administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at Headquarters with a dependant recognized by the United Nations must review their entitlements to dependency benefits as described in the present circular.

3. All other offices away from United Nations Headquarters in New York will be responsible for reviewing dependency claims for their own staff and for submitting copies of the relevant information circulars to the Office of Human Resources Management.

4. The electronic dependency questionnaire (e-P.84) in Inspira will contain the information currently recorded for each staff member and his or her dependants in the Integrated Management Information System. Staff members are requested to review that information carefully, make any necessary changes or corrections and certify the accuracy of the information contained in the form, including the question regarding the amount of dependency benefit in the form of a government grant received for each child.

* The present circular will be in effect until further notice.

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I. Submission of claims using the electronic dependency questionnaire (e-P.84)

5. Staff members will receive e-mail instructions from the Office of Human Resources Management on how to access their dependency questionnaire in Inspira (at inspira.un.org).

6. Upon receipt of the instructions, staff members who have a dependant recognized by the United Nations shall review their dependency data for 2013 in Inspira and electronically submit proposed changes to the Office using the electronic dependency questionnaire (e-P.84).

II. Retroactive submission of claims for 2013 and/or 2014

7. In accordance with staff rule 3.17, a staff member who has not been receiving an allowance, grant or other payment to which he or she is entitled shall not receive retroactively such allowance, grant or payment unless the staff member has made a written claim within one year following the date on which the staff member would have been entitled to the initial payment. In this regard, staff members wishing to add dependants for 2013 and/or 2014 may do so by submitting the required original supporting documentation, such as a birth or adoption certificate, to the section that services their area in the Human Resources Service of the Office of Human Resources Management. Upon review and verification, the original documentation shall be returned to the staff member. For more details on the required supporting documents or documentation for continuance of the benefit, see annex III.

III. Supporting documentation

8. **Documentation not required**. No documentation is required for a staff member to continue receiving dependency benefits for the following dependants: an unemployed spouse, a dependent child under the age of 18 residing with the staff member and not receiving dependency benefit in the form of a government grant, or a secondary dependant residing with the staff member on a full-time basis.

9. **Documentation required**. In order to verify a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits, and to establish his or her continued entitlements to such dependency benefits, documentation in support of the entitlement is required from the staff member for the following dependants: an employed spouse, a child under the age of 18 not residing with the staff member, a child receiving a government grant, a child between the ages of 18 and 21 and a secondary dependant not residing with the staff member. See annex III to the present circular for a summary of the documentation required in support of a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits.

10. **Obligation to retain original documentation**. Staff members must retain all required original documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits and must be ready to provide that documentation to the Office of Human Resources Management or the Office of Internal Oversight Services upon request, within 30 days for monitoring purposes (see annex III). Failure to do so will result in the

immediate recovery of monies and the discontinuation of benefits and could result in disciplinary action.

11. Staff members are required to submit the necessary documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits to the contact location identified in annex II. Partial documentation is not acceptable and may result in the immediate recovery of monies and the discontinuation of benefits, and could result in disciplinary action.

12. When it is necessary for evidence of support payments to be submitted, the following will be considered as acceptable proof: cancelled cheques, money-order receipts, wire-transfer receipts and original records of bank transactions, including printouts of online bank transfer receipts. Cash transactions are not considered to be acceptable proof of support.

13. The submission of forged documents, the making of a false certification of the information contained in form e-P.84 or a misrepresentation of facts related to a claim for dependency benefits may lead to the initiation of a disciplinary process and the imposition of disciplinary measures.

IV. Deadline for submission

14. The e-P.84 forms should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than 30 July 2014. Dependency benefits will be discontinued and overpayment recovered in accordance with section 3 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2009/1, when a staff member does not submit the e-P.84 form and any requisite documentation by 30 July 2014. Prior to the recovery of any overpayment, staff members will be advised in writing of the decision to recover the overpayment and of the reasons therefor. Recovery will be made through deductions of 20 per cent of the staff member's net monthly salary (excluding United Nations Federal Credit Union deductions) until such time as the full amount is recovered. In instances where the duration of the staff member's contract does not allow for a deduction at as low a rate as 20 per cent, the overpayment will be deducted at a monthly rate that is sufficient to recover the full amount by the expiration date of the contract.

15. Staff members are reminded that, in addition to discontinuation of dependency benefits, non-compliance with the submission deadline may also result in a determination that the claimed individuals are no longer dependants, which could impact on the continuation of other benefits, including the G-4 visa, education grant, education grant travel and home leave travel. It is therefore imperative that staff members complete the e-P.84 by the deadline set out in paragraph 14.

Annex I

Types of dependency benefits

1. Staff members in the General Service and related categories may receive a dependency allowance for each recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child or children. The amounts are set out in the local salary scales, which are established for every duty station and are periodically revised.

2. Staff members in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category will be paid salary at the dependency rate for the first recognized primary dependant, who may be a spouse or a child. A dependency allowance will be paid for each additional primary dependant child at the rates approved by the General Assembly.

3. The conditions for the recognition of a dependency benefit on account of a spouse, child or children or secondary dependant of the staff member are set out in paragraph (a) of staff rule 3.6 and in administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5.

Dependent spouse

4. A spouse will be recognized as a dependant when his or her gross occupational earnings, if any, do not exceed the limit established for this purpose as set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (i) and in administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 2.1, for a particular calendar year.

5. For staff members in the General Service and related categories and the National Professional Officer category, the earnings limit is the lowest entry level of the United Nations General Service gross salary scale in force on 1 January of the year concerned for the closest United Nations duty station in the country of the spouse's place of work.

6. For staff members in the Professional and higher categories and staff members in the Field Service category, the earnings limit for the spouse's annual gross occupational earnings is the higher of:

(i) The lowest entry level of the United Nations General Service gross salary scale in force on 1 January of the year concerned for the closest United Nations duty station in the country of the spouse's place of work; or

(ii) The gross salary for the lowest entry level in force on 1 January of the year concerned at the base of the salary system (G-2, step 1, for New York).

7. In New York, the earnings limit for 2013 was $41,851 (gross salary in effect on 1 January 2013 for a staff member at the G-2, step 1 level).

Dependent child or children

8. The conditions for the recognition of a dependency benefit on account of a child or children of the staff member are set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (ii-iv) and administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 3. Dependency benefits on account of children with a disability will be paid in accordance with the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 4.

Secondary dependants

9. The conditions for the recognition of a dependency benefit on account of a secondary dependant of the staff member are set out in staff rule 3.6 (a) (v) and administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/5, section 5. When a secondary dependant is recognized, a benefit will be paid at the rate determined by the General Assembly for staff in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category. For staff in the General Service and related categories in New York, the allowance will be paid in the amount set out in the local salary scales, as periodically revised, that are established for each duty station.

Annex II

Contact locations

Staff members administered by Headquarters

Staff members administered by Headquarters who wish to apply for dependency benefits for the first time, who are required to submit documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits for 2013 or who have any questions regarding dependency benefits or form e-P.84 should contact their respective human resources assistant, designated for each Section listed below, by telephone or e-mail (if you do not know who your human resources assistant is, please use the "Contact us" link in Inspira (https://careers.un.org/support.aspx?Language=en-us)) or go to the following location: Human Resources Service, 304 East 45th Street, 6th Floor, New York.

Section I

Department of Management

Department of Safety and Security

Department of Public Information (including for all information centres)

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

United Nations Democracy Fund

International Civil Service Commission

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate

Section II

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Department of Field Support

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Department of Political Affairs

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict

Executive Office of the Secretary-General

Peacebuilding Support Office

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Office for Disarmament Affairs

Regional Commissions New York Office

Section III

Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

Office of Legal Affairs

United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

Office of Internal Oversight Services

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions

Staff members in field missions

Staff members in United Nations field missions who wish to apply for dependency benefits for the first time, who are required to submit documentation in support of an entitlement to dependency benefits for 2013, or who have any questions regarding dependency benefits or form e-P.84, should contact the Chief Human Resources Officer or equivalent at their respective missions.

Staff members and personnel in other offices

Staff members in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and liaison offices should contact the human resources office in the respective location.

Associate Experts Programme and other personnel administered by the Capacity Development Office, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, should contact Human Resources Management, Capacity Development Office/Department of Economic and Social Affairs (One United Nations Plaza (DC1), 25th Floor, New York).

For all technical inquiries about using form e-P.84 in Inspira, please use the "Contact us" link in Inspira (https://careers.un.org/support.aspx?Language=en-us).

Annex III

Required documentation for continuance of benefits

The following table summarizes the documentation required as evidence of a staff member's entitlement to dependency benefits for 2013.

1. For a spouse with no occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	No additional documentation is required. However, the staff member will be required to certify that the spouse was unemployed for the period under review (2013).
2. For a spouse with occupational earnings and claimed as a dependant	Proof of gross occupational earnings: W-2 form, tax return or an original statement of earnings from spouse's employer.
3. For every child claimed as a dependant	An original birth certificate must be presented when the child is claimed as a dependant for the first time.
4. If in receipt of the allowance, for a child under the age of 18 residing with the staff member	No additional documentation is required.
5. For a child (natural or legally adopted) not residing with the staff member or with the other parent (except as provided in number 6, below)	Proof of all payments made directly to the child or to his/her legal guardian for the required amount during 2013, in the form of cancelled cheques, money-order or wire-transfer receipts, or records of bank transactions. The amount of support should be at least equal to the amount of the dependency benefit received from the Organization. In addition, in the case of minor children, a notarized affidavit from the legal guardian must be provided attesting to the legal guardianship of the child, that the child resides with him/her and that the staff member is providing continuous support for the upkeep of the child. Cash transactions are not considered acceptable proof of support.
6. For a child of a staff member who is not the custodial parent or who has joint custody of the child	The original or certified copy of the divorce decree or other court document specifying the amount of child support to be paid by the staff member, plus proof of payment in the year concerned in the form of cancelled cheques, money-order or wire-transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. Cash transactions are not considered to be acceptable proof of support. The amount of payment should be at least the amount of the court-ordered child support, or the amount of the child dependency benefit received from the Organization, which ever is higher. In the absence of a court document, an original notarized affidavit from the custodial parent must be provided attesting that the staff member provided continuing support and specifying the amounts paid during 2013, together with the proof of payment described in the initial paragraph.

7. For a child between the ages of 18 and 21[a]	Staff members who were not in receipt of an education grant should submit an original completed form P.41/B (certificate of school attendance) for the school years 2012/13 and 2013/14. Where the school year coincides with the calendar year, form P.41/B should be submitted for 2013. No additional documentation for proof of full-time school attendance is required for a child for whom the staff member received an education grant for the academic years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
8. For a child of a staff member who is in receipt of a government grant	Original government assistance documents reflecting the amounts received each year.
9. For a secondary dependant who resides with the staff member	Staff member's certification of support provided on form e-P.84.
10. For a secondary dependant who did not reside with the staff member[b]	Proof of all payments made directly to the secondary dependant for the required amount during 2013, in the form of cancelled cheques, money-order or wire-transfer receipts or records of bank transactions. Cash transactions are not considered to be acceptable proof of support. The secondary dependant must be reflected as the recipient on all proof of payment. Staff member must provide one half or more of the dependant's support and, in any case, at least twice the amount of the dependency allowance.

[a] Dependency status is recognized through a period of vacation between school years when the child enrols for full-time attendance during the regular school year. Otherwise, the dependency status ceases as of the last day of full-time attendance at the educational institution. The required forms are available on iSeek under Quick Links/Forms/Allowances and Benefits or from the Executive or Administrative Offices at Headquarters and local Personnel Offices.

[b] At the time of establishment of an entitlement to a benefit for a secondary dependant, staff members should submit in person their own birth certificate as well as the birth certificate or passport of the secondary dependant, with an original, complete form P.85 and proof of support as stated above. Please note that the birth certificates and/or passport must be original or certified true copies.